

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 436 770

CS 216 952

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TITLE Europe: Language Arts around the World, Volume I. Cross Curricular Activities for Grades 4-6.  
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication, Bloomington, IN.; Family Learning Association, Bloomington, IN.  
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.  
ISBN ISBN-1-883790-42-5  
PUB DATE 2000-00-00  
NOTE 65p.  
CONTRACT ED-99-CO-0028  
AVAILABLE FROM ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication, Indiana University, 2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150, Bloomington, IN 47408-2698; Family Learning Association, 3901 Hagan St., Suite H, Bloomington, IN 47401.  
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)  
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.  
DESCRIPTORS Class Activities; Communication Skills; \*Cultural Traits; Folk Culture; \*Foreign Countries; Integrated Activities; Intermediate Grades; \*Language Arts; Multiple Intelligences; Reading Skills; Social Studies; Spelling; Thematic Approach; Units of Study; Writing Skills  
IDENTIFIERS \*Europe

## ABSTRACT

Suggesting that students in the intermediate grades can explore the world around them and practice valuable skills in spelling, reading, writing, communication, and language, this book presents cross-curricular units designed to integrate language-arts activities into the study of European cultures. The units in the book reach diverse needs by working through emotional memory, deductive reasoning, and multiple intelligences. Features of the book include: ready-to-use activities; emphasis on skills; reading texts; and group demonstrations. After an introduction on the role of language arts in social studies, units in the book deal with Great Britain and Ireland; France; Spain; Germany; and Italy. Appendixes list 11 additional resources on folktales and legends, annotations of 4 children's books about other cultures, and 8 web sites that offer general information. (RS)

# LANGUAGE ARTS AROUND THE WORLD

## CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR GRADES 4-6

# EUROPE

- GREAT BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND
- FRANCE
- SPAIN
- GERMANY
- ITALY

BY

LUCY FUCHS

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CLEARINGHOUSE ON READING,  
ENGLISH, AND COMMUNICATION

THE FAMILY  
LEARNING  
ASSOCIATION

# **Language Arts Around the World**

## ***EUROPE***

**by Lucy Fuchs**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading,  
English, and Communication**

and

***The Family Learning Association***

*Published by*  
ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication  
Indiana University  
2805 East 10th Street, Suite 150  
Bloomington, Indiana 47408-2698  
Carl B. Smith, Director  
and  
**The Family Learning Association**  
3901 Hagan Street, Suite H  
Bloomington, IN 47401

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**Production Editor: Lanny Thomas**  
**Cover Design: Lauren Gottlieb**

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This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-99-CO-0028. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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# ***The Role of Language Arts in Social Studies***

To a great extent, the study of language lies at the heart of the entire school curriculum. In addition to reading, most subjects require some form of writing as well as constant use of language in speaking and listening. Even the understanding of mathematics and science depends on clear and careful use of language.

The social sciences include anthropology, sociology, psychology, and other areas of study. All of these contribute to our understanding of human nature as it exists throughout history and the world. They also require us to use language carefully as well as creatively.

As we study other cultures we meet new languages, encounter new concepts that require new words to express them, and discover new ways to develop our ability to listen and to speak. While they provide a wealth of opportunities to use all of our reading and writing skills, the social sciences also demand increased attention to accuracy in spelling and precision in grammar.

In the early and middle grades, we help students understand different cultures by showing how people live and adapt to their environments. We look at differences as well as similarities and find the elements that unite all human beings. Ultimately we study history, geography, and other areas of social science in order to understand ourselves and our own lives.

## ***The Importance of Folktales and Legends***

Throughout this book you will find references to folktales, legends, and myths of various cultures. Of course these stories are interesting in themselves, but they are even more important because they help students understand each culture and its people. Furthermore, they provide a way to learn something about the languages of various cultures, and they can also show children how language can be used to hold the interest of the reader or listener by developing stories that follow clear patterns.

Some folktales tell us what life is like today, while others give an idea of what it was like in the past. People who make their living from the sea, for example, will have a tradition of telling tales of sailors braving storms and encountering amazing creatures in the ocean. Farmers or nomads or people who live in the mountains will tell tales about the things they encounter in their lives. This provides an interesting way for children to learn something about people whose environment and culture are very different from their own.

Legends and myths of the past also tell us something about the history and heritage of a culture. In some cases, people of the present will view the stories of their ancestors and their culture as part of their living tradition. This is especially true of the American Indians and of some regions of the Orient. By incorporating folktales into the study of various cultures, you can help children learn about other people while they are learning how to understand and use language not only to gather information but to tell stories as well.

## **Using This Book**

My purpose is to help the teacher who wants to integrate language-arts activities into the study of other cultures. Each unit focuses on vocabulary words, description of a cultural scene, writing activities, and discussion activities.

Of course it is necessary to have some information about the country being studied, but much of this can be obtained from any basic encyclopedia. You can look through encyclopedia articles yourself to get information about each country and its people, or you can have older students undertake this for themselves. Even more information can be found by consulting the Web Sites listed throughout this book.

Each unit suggests a number of activities that will help students learn about other countries and people. At times, the suggestions are no more than that: just suggestions. I hope you will use this book as a starting point, adding ideas of your own and taking advantage of all the materials available to you.

On the title page of each unit you will find a map of the country. Use this to make a transparency or photocopies if you like. Within most units you will find one or more pages showing words taken into English from the language of the country being studied. If you like, you can use these pages to make transparencies so that students can see the words you are talking about. Other options would be to put the word lists on the board or make photocopies. Then, at the end of each unit, you will find activities based on these word lists. If you want to use them, you can make photocopies so each student can have one.

## **A Personal Note**

I have been traveling and teaching for many years. If you want to get to know another country, nothing takes the place of living there for a while. But then, after I got to know Thailand, for example, or Mexico and fell in love with them, what could I do with that knowledge and love? It seemed natural to share my knowledge with students and to use what I had learned to help them develop their skills in language arts. Hence this book.

*—Lucy Fuchs*

# **GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND**

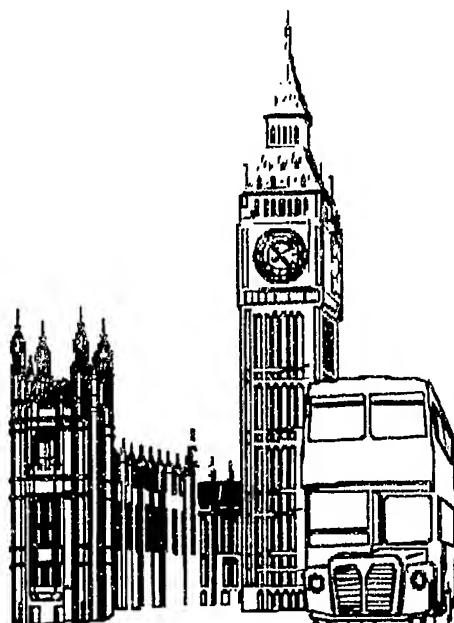


# GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

The island nation of Great Britain includes England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. These countries, also known as the British Isles, have given Americans a large part of our heritage, including our language, our laws, and many of our customs. The southern part of Ireland forms a separate country, a green island that has exerted great influence on our imagination and has brought much energy to our culture.

The British Isles are close to America in some respects and yet far removed in other ways. We speak a language that is supposedly the same, but we often mean different things in what we say. We look upon England as a country of culture and long traditions, and we admire it for its heritage of literature and development of the liberties we so cherish (although it was England itself which we had to fight in order to achieve our precious independence). We look upon Ireland as a country of quaint and charming people, places, and objects. These impressions may not be entirely correct, but they are at least partially right, as most stereotypes are.

There is something majestic in the long succession of British kings and queens living in castles, their lives filled with royal rituals. There is something enticing about seeing castles and cathedrals and cemeteries that date back centuries, not just decades, to ages long before North America was known to exist. Yet the British Isles are full of modern inventions and modern expressions, in some cases more developed than our own supposedly modern styles. These small islands, no longer ruling the waves or the continents, still exert an amazing influence over the whole world, especially over cultural and educational life.



## Language and Word Skills

Because Britain and America share the same basic language, students will be interested to discover how the everyday languages differ in some details. The development of English in its earliest stages also provides a good subject for study because it explains how our language came to exist in its present form.

### Comparing British and American English

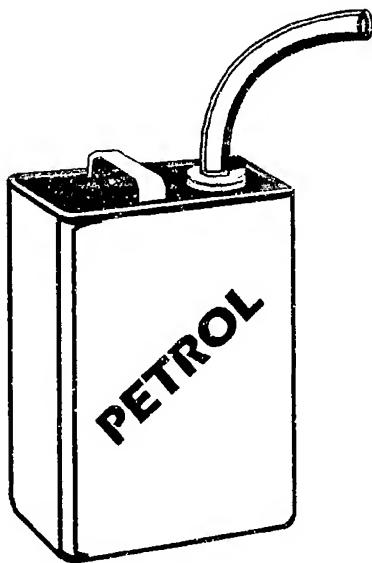
Students who watch television or movies from England often find British English hard to understand at first. The differences come from pronunciation as well as speed. In America, spoken English is more drawn out, with each syllable enunciated more slowly, especially in certain parts of the country. On the other hand, British speakers sometimes omit certain syllables or stress different syllables: *laboratory* (*laBORat'ry*) and *Worcestershire* (*WOOStersher*), for example. They also tend to use shortened forms of some words, such as *telly* for *television*. In addition, there are slang expressions that are not familiar to most Americans. Of course, we also have slang not used by the English.

In spelling, a common difference is the British use of the extra *u* in certain words such as *labour*, *honour*, and *colour*, which end with *-or* in American English. Also, words that end with *er* in American English (such as *center* and *theater*) are spelled with final *re* in Britain (*centre* and *theatre*). The British also use completely different words in other cases, such as *lorry* for *truck* and *tube* for *subway*. These comparisons can make for lively discussions and list making which will enhance students' knowledge and appreciation of the English language.

### ***Differences between British and American English***

Here are some British words followed by the words we use in America to name the same item. You can see that each British word has a somewhat different meaning in American English. For example, if a British speaker talked about a *boot* and a *bonnet*, he would probably be talking about his car. We might think he was talking about something to wear on our feet and our head.

<b>British</b>	<b>American</b>
biscuit	cookie
bonnet	hood of a car
boot	trunk of a car
chips	French fries
lift	elevator
petrol	gasoline
spanner	wrench
windscreen	windshield



*Activity 1* at the end of this unit can be used for additional work on British words.

## **Development of the English Language**

The long history of the English language need not be taught in great detail in the early grades, but there is much that students can learn about the origin of many words in the language.

### ***Old English (450-1100)***

In the fifth century A.D., Anglo-Saxon tribes from northern Germany sailed across the North Sea and began to occupy the British Isles. The Germanic language of the Anglo-Saxons, which came to be known as Old English, established the basis for today's English. The language we speak today has changed enormously over the past fifteen centuries and has been influenced by other languages as well, especially French, Latin, and Greek.

For example, most words used by the earliest Anglo-Saxons were short and related to the most basic of human activities. Their language has come to be called Old English to distinguish it from later stages of development.

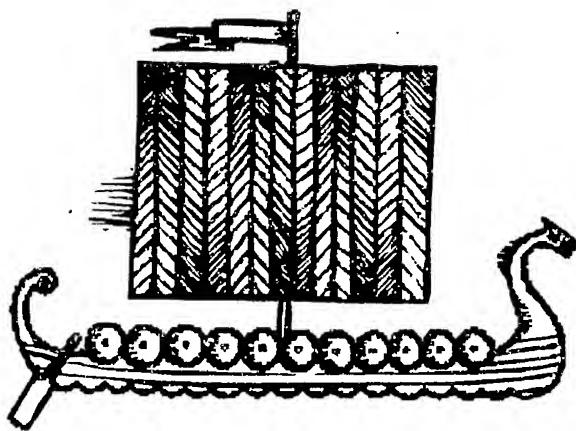
On the following page you will find a list of words in their present-day spellings, followed by the same words in their Old English spellings. Make a transparency or photocopies of these words so that students can see them as you talk about them.

You can see that the modern forms of most of these words are even shorter than the originals, and endings such as *-an* in *riinan* have disappeared over the centuries. Also, it is important to realize that the Anglo-Saxons pronounced every vowel and most consonants in every word. For example, in its original form the word *sweord* was pronounced *sway-ord*; later it was shortened to a single syllable, *sword*, but the *w* remains as a silent letter. Other words we use contain such "silent letters" that were originally pronounced: the *gh* in *night* and *neighbor*, for example. Some pairs of consonants were pronounced as single sounds, as with the letters *sc* which represented the /sh/ sound in *scip* and *fisc*.

### ***Old English Words We Still Use Today***

This list shows some present-day words in their Modern English spellings. In the right column you see the original form of each word as it was spelled in Old English, the language spoken in England more than a thousand years ago. The letters *sc* had the /sh/ sound in Old English. Also, each vowel was pronounced separately, so the word *weorc* sounded like *wayork*. You can see that the spelling of some words has changed only a little over the years, while other words have changed much more.

<b>Modern English</b>	<b>Old English</b>
eat	etan
work	weorc
play	plegan
run	rinnan
walk	wealcan
house	hus
ship	scip
field	feld
night	niht
word	sweord
dog	docga
fish	fisc
pig	pigge
cow	cu
sheep	sceap



*Activity 2* at the end of this unit can be used for further practice.

## Middle English (1100-1500)

In 1066, England was conquered by invaders from Normandy in France. This marked the beginning of the period of Middle English, in which the French language exerted great influence on the development of English. Although the English people themselves continued to speak their native language, the French nobility added many of their own words to the English language. For example, animals such as pigs, cows, and sheep were still called by their English names, but in the castles where the Norman nobility lived, the meat from such animals was called by French names: *porc* (pork), *boeuf* (beef), and *mouton* (mutton).

## Modern English (1500-Today)

The period known as Modern English began around 1500, just before the age of Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth I. The language that developed from 1500 to 1800 is called Early Modern English. During this period, many Greek and Latin words were added to the English vocabulary. The language after 1800 is often called Present-day English.

Older students might enjoy looking at the spelling of words in the period of Early Modern English. It was not unusual for the same word to be spelled in several different ways, even on the same page. This is because consistent spelling patterns were not established until long after Shakespeare's day. In fact, it was not until the late eighteenth century that spelling conventions brought order to the spelling of the English language.

In Early Modern English, the letter *j* was rarely used. Instead, the letter *i* (or *I*) was used for both *i* and *j*, as in *Juliet* (Juliet). Furthermore, this letter *I* had the sound of *Y* (as in *Yuliet*).

The letters *u* and *v* were not always used as they are today. The letter *v* (or *V*) was often used at the beginning of words such as *very* (with the *v* sound) as well as *vse* (meaning *use*). On the other hand, the letter *u* (or *U*) was usually used within words for either the *u* or *v* sound, as in *neuer* (for *never*). Finally, the long *s* (which looks like a florid *f* without the cross bar) was used everywhere except as the final letter.

The list on the following page shows a few words in their present-day spelling followed by some of the spellings used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

## Spelling Changes over the Centuries

Here are some words as they are spelled today followed by the same words as they were spelled 500 years ago. Notice that most words have become shorter and simpler over time.

Present-day spelling	Earlier spelling
much	muchē
draft	draught
crowd	croud
very	veray
music	musick
spear	speare
writing	wrytyng
such	suche
save	sauē
fire	fyre

*Activity 3* at the end of this unit provides additional practice on these words.

<i>The Tragedie of Romeo and Juliet.</i>		59
<p><i>Mer. Romeo, Humours, Madman, Passion, Louer,</i>  <i>Appeare thou in the likenesse of a figh,</i>  <i>Speake but one rime, and I am fatisched:</i>  <i>Cryme but ay me, Prouant, but Loue and day,</i>  <i>Speake to my gofship <i>Venus</i> one faire word,</i>  <i>One Nickname for her purblind Sonne and her,</i>  <i>Young <i>Abrabam Cupid</i> he that shot so true,</i>  <i>When King <i>Cyberna</i> lou'd the begger Maid,</i>  <i>He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moueth not,</i>  <i>The Ape is dead, I must coniure him,</i>  <i>I coniure thee by <i>Rosalme</i> bright eyē,</i>  <i>By her High forehead, and her Scarlet lip,</i>  <i>By her Finc foote, Straight leg, and Quivering thigh,</i>  <i>And the Demeanece, that there Adacent lie.</i></p>	<p><i>Vnto the white vpturned wondring eyes</i>  <i>Of mortalls that fall backe to gare on him,</i>  <i>When he bestrides the lazie puffing Cloudes,</i>  <i>And sailes vpon the bosome of the ayre.</i></p>	<p><i>Int. O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?</i>  <i>Denie thy Father and refuse thy name:</i>  <i>Or if thou wilt not, be but sworne my Loue,</i>  <i>And Ile no longer be a Capulet.</i></p>
		<p><i>Rom.</i> Shall I heare more, or shall I speake at this?  <i>Int.</i> 'Tis but thy name that is my Enemy:  <i>Thou art thy selfe, though not a Montague,</i>  <i>What's Montague? it is nor hand nor foote,</i>  <i>Nor arm, nor face, O be some other name</i>  <i>Belonging to a man.</i></p>

*This is a reproduction of a page from the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's works, published in 1623.*

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## Characteristics of Elizabethan English

Depending on their ages and backgrounds, students may enjoy seeing how the English language was used in earlier periods. One of the most interesting is the age of Queen Elizabeth I, who reigned from 1558 to 1603. The works of Elizabethan writers such as Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and Christopher Marlowe often contain sentences whose structure and vocabulary seem unusual to us today.

### A Question of Syntax

For example, questions in today's English often begin with a helping verb followed by the subject and the main verb: "Are you leaving now?" However, the helping verbs we use so often had not become firmly established in the English of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Writers such as Shakespeare would have been more likely to begin with the main verb followed by the subject: "Leave you now?" Here are a few other examples:

*Ride you to London?* (Are you riding to London?)

*Saw you the king?* (Did you see the king?)

*Heard you the latest news?* (Have you heard the latest news?)

Questions that began with *what* or *why* or *when* also often omitted the helping verb.

*What think you on it?* (What do you think about it?)

*Why spoke you thus to him?* (Why did you speak to him that way?)

*When sails this ship for France?* (When does this ship sail for France?)

Here are a few more questions taken directly from Shakespeare's plays. Notice that some words have meanings different from those of today's English. Also, when a helping verb is found in a sentence, we often encounter spellings that are no longer used.

*How came her eyes so bright?* (Why are her eyes so bright?)

*How lost you company?* (How did your friendship end?)

*Why dost thou stay?* (Why do you stay?)

*Which way hast thou been?* (Which way have you been?)

*What is 't o'clock?* (What is the time? or What time is it?)

### Student Activity

Students can practice by writing simple questions that begin with helping verbs in today's English. Then they can rewrite these questions in Elizabethan English by leaving out the helping verb and starting with the main verb directly before the subject. Here are some examples, with the "Elizabethan" version given in italics:

Are you going to see them? (*Go you to see them?*)

Did you hear that noise? (*Heard you that noise?*)

Is this what he saw? (*Saw he this?*)

For further practice, have students write simple declarative sentences that have active verbs. Then turn them into questions by beginning with the main verb followed by the subject, with no helping verb added.

She goes to school. (*Goes she to school?*)

He plays for your team. (*Plays he for your team?*)

They saw the storm approach. (*Saw they the storm approach?*)

### Double Double

Another convention of early English also seems unusual today. For many centuries, long before Elizabethan English, double comparisons and superlatives and multiple negatives were often used for emphasis.

*A more better man you will not find.*

*This was the most unkindest cut of all.*

*He never yet no evil word said against anyone.*

In particular, the piling up of negatives served to intensify the force of the statement. Today we accept the principle that two negatives cancel each other; to us, "I do *not* have *no* more money" means "I do have some more money." However, for much of its history, English often used this kind of intensification through repetition. It was not until the eighteenth century that such practices were considered incorrect.

## Writing

One of England's greatest claims to fame is its literature. Here, as nowhere else, students can learn best by modeling their own writing on the great works of the past. This is an excellent time to have students, according to their age, read the literature and then try to compose writings that illustrate their understanding of each author's style.

## Folktales

Traditional British stories include *The Gingerbread Man*, *The Little Red Hen*, and *Three Little Pigs* (or, as it is known in Scotland, *The Three Wee Piggies*). These are good examples of folk tales that originated in Britain and are familiar in America as well. Another interesting story is that of *Robin Hood* and his Merry Men. Have your students find out as much as they can about Robin Hood to see if he ever actually lived.

Younger children could read and discuss Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit* and her other stories and note how she never talks down to children, even using difficult words at times. They could then write their own stories about animals or about their favorite toys after the manner of A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*.

## Satires

When reading stories such as those from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, students should first become aware of how the author satirized English life; then they can write satires of their own society. Examples would be poking fun at the way Americans constantly complain about the government but rarely make many changes. Or Americans are always buying time-saving devices, but rarely make good use of the extra time they save. What do they use it for—to watch television? Or they complain that most television is useless, but when there are more educational programs on, they rarely watch them. Or they complain that there are too many commercials, but watch them avidly or miss them when they watch videos that have none.

More serious essays could be written about social problems that exist in Britain and Ireland, such as the Northern Ireland problem, or the aftermath of the British Empire. (What did it do to the British, and what did it do to their colonies?)

## Oral Skills

Because of the great wealth of stories from the British Isles, students can make story telling a major part of their study of the island nation.

### Storytelling

In many parts of Great Britain it is common for people to tell their family stories. For example, people in Wales like to tell what their parents, their grandparents, and even their great-grandparents did. This would be a useful activity for students to research and follow through: the telling of family stories and the feeling of pride in their heritage.

For countless generations the Irish have been great storytellers, and many of their tales are of magical or mysterious events. They especially like to tell stories of little people, such as leprechauns, or to tell jokes that poke fun at foolish people.

#### *Student Activity*

Students can learn such stories from books or can make up their own. This will help them learn how to tell stories that keep their listeners interested. Skills of storytelling include the following:

- ◆ Making the story one's own. Telling a story is very different from reading one to others.
- ◆ Using voice changes as one plays the part of each individual.
- ◆ Building suspense in a story by telling the story part by part, using a strong beginning which captures the listeners' attention, a development of the story by adding details and events, allowing them to accumulate until the listeners are totally engrossed, and finally letting the ending come with a crash, either for a laugh, a shudder, or simply a sigh of deep satisfaction.

Scottish folklore includes many tales of ghosts, monsters, and witches. These, too, can use many of the techniques given above. A ghost story requires a tone of voice different from that used by the teller of a joke. Here one needs to tell the story softly, slowly, allowing quiet spaces for the listener to feel fear, anxiety, or horror.

In scary stories, even more than others, it is important to build the suspense slowly by revealing important details very slowly. Students can have an enlightening discussion on the way some television shows or movies develop suspense through their use of scenes and music. Some overdo it by revealing too much too fast.

## ACTIVITY 1

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Look at the British words given here.

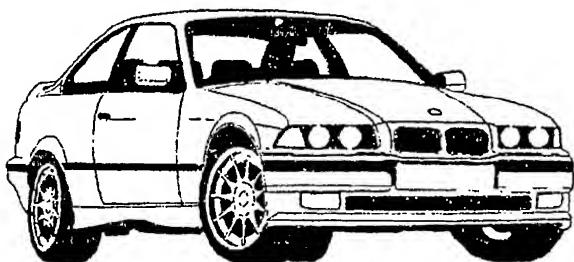
biscuit	lift
bonnet	petrol
boot	spanner
chips	windscreen

Now look at each American word and write the British word that matches each one.

**American**

**British**

1. trunk of a car \_\_\_\_\_
2. elevator \_\_\_\_\_
3. wrench \_\_\_\_\_
4. cookie \_\_\_\_\_
5. French fries \_\_\_\_\_
6. windshield \_\_\_\_\_
7. hood of a car \_\_\_\_\_
8. gasoline \_\_\_\_\_



## ACTIVITY 2

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

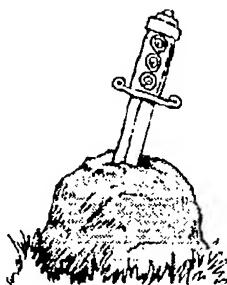
Look at these Old English words that were introduced earlier:

scip	niht
hus	feld
pigge	docga
fisc	cu
sweord	weorc

Write the Old English word that matches the Modern English words given here:

**Modern English**

1. fish \_\_\_\_\_
2. ship \_\_\_\_\_
3. dog \_\_\_\_\_
4. work \_\_\_\_\_
5. house \_\_\_\_\_
6. sword \_\_\_\_\_
7. field \_\_\_\_\_
8. cow \_\_\_\_\_
9. pig \_\_\_\_\_
10. night \_\_\_\_\_



## ACTIVITY 3

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

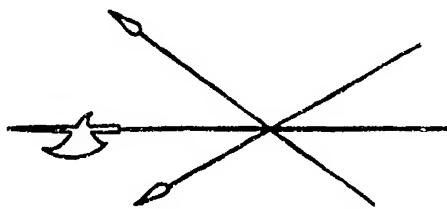
Look at how these words were spelled in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries:

### Earlier Spellings

muche	speare
draught	wrytyng
croud	suche
veray	saue
musick	fyre

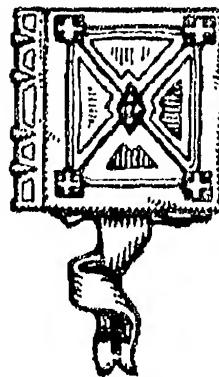
Now look at the present-day spellings of these same words. Write each earlier spelling on the line provided.

Present-day Spelling	Earlier Spelling
1. music	_____
2. fire	_____
3. such	_____
4. much	_____
5. spear	_____
6. draft	_____
7. writing	_____
8. crowd	_____
9. fire	_____
10. very	_____



## Folktales from Great Britain

*Best-Loved Folktales of the World* by Joanna Coles contains 24 stories from the British Isles.



*British Folktales* by Katharine Briggs (NY: Dorset Press, 1977).

Students can sample the many types of folktales found in Great Britain, including Fairy Tales, Nursery Tales (such as "The Three Bears" and "The Three Wee Pigs"), and stories of Bogies, Dragons, Ghosts, and Giants.

*English Fables and Fairy Stories* by James Reeves (NY: Oxford University Press; pap.).

*Favorite Fairy Tales Told in England* by Virginia Haviland

*Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Ireland* by Virginia Haviland

*Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Scotland* by Virginia Haviland

Each title is available in paperback from Beech Tree Books, an imprint of William Morrow & Co., NY.

*Scottish Folktales and Legends* by Barbara Ker Wilson (NY: Oxford University Press; pap.).

*A Treasury of Irish Stories* chosen by James Riordan (NY: Kingfisher, 1995).

*A World of Fairy Tales* by Andrew Lang contains two Scottish stories, "The King of the Waterfalls" and "Ian, the Soldier's Son" (NY: Dial Books, 1994).

## Web Sites

Destination Ireland

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com.au/dest/eur/ire.htm>

Braveheart's Scotland

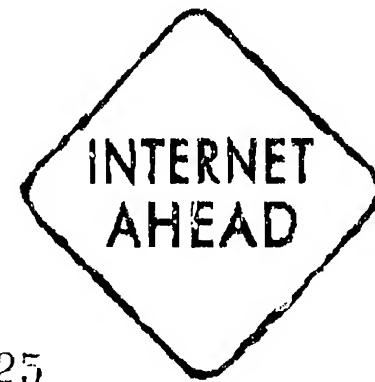
<http://www.magicdragon.com/Wallace/index.html>

City Net - United Kingdom

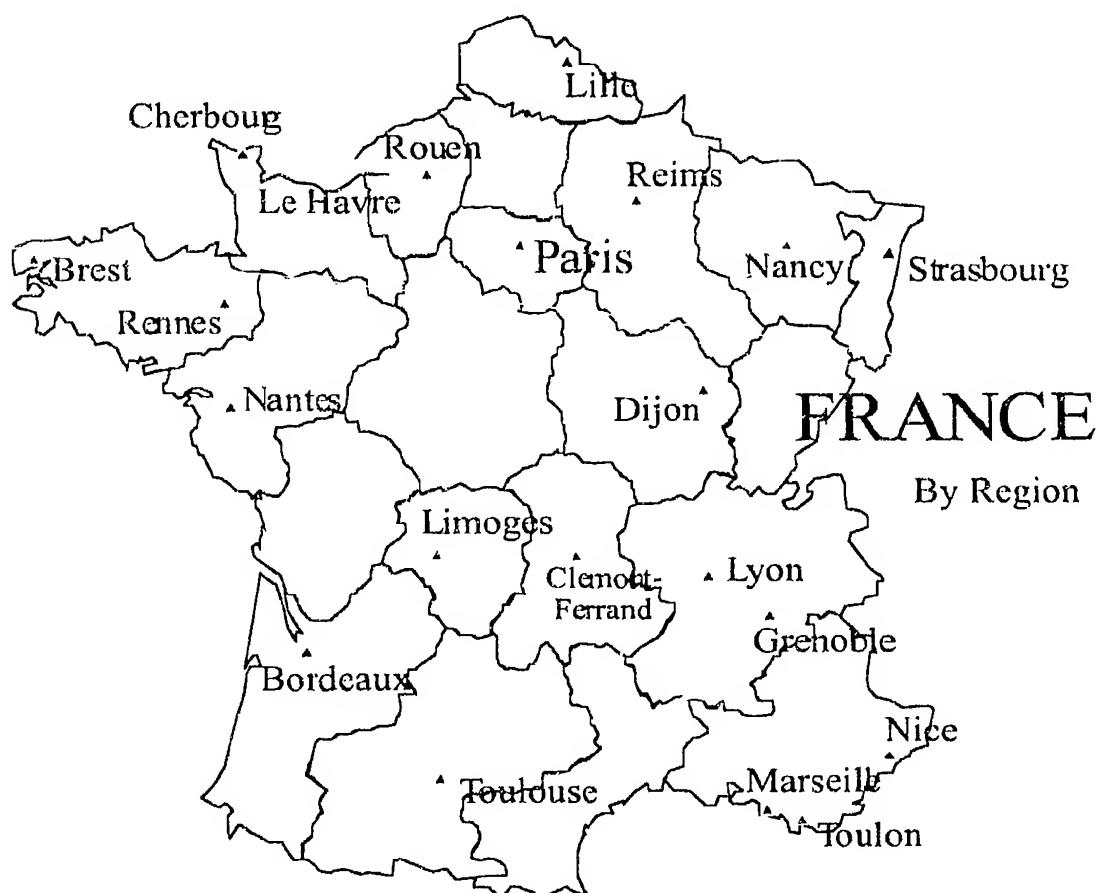
[http://www.city.net/countries/united\\_kingdom/](http://www.city.net/countries/united_kingdom/)

City Net - Ireland

<http://www.city.net/countries/ireland/>



# FRANCE



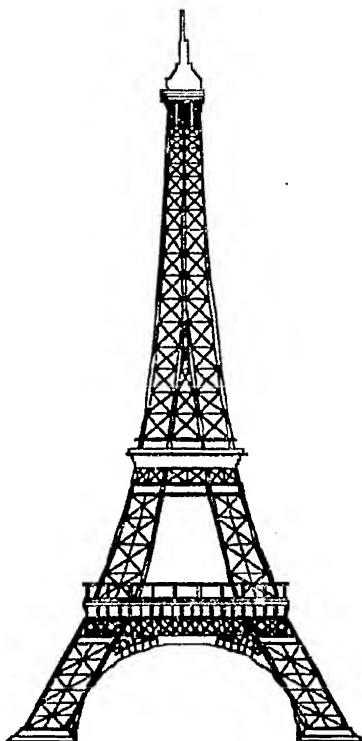
# FRANCE

Where in the world is everything done with style and class always differently from anywhere else? In France, of course, a land of culture and conflict, proud of its food and wine, its fashions, and its art and literature. Although France requires a regimented education for its youth, that same education is also responsible for developing rugged individuals.

France may be governed by Paris, the city of light and love and laughter, but it is strengthened by its other cities:

- ◆ Marseilles, with its seafaring heritage;
- ◆ Lyon, proud of its silk and cuisine;
- ◆ Bordeaux, known for its wine; and
- ◆ Limoges, famous for its porcelain.

France, with its mountains and plains, borders on the cold Atlantic as well as on the moderate Mediterranean. It is a country that never allows you to forget that France is France and does not want to be anything else. This is why the French place so much emphasis on their language. They love their language and appreciate anyone who makes the effort to learn it.



## Language and Word Skills

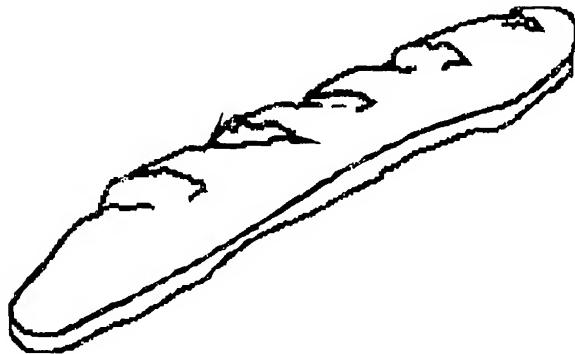
Over the centuries, many French words have been taken directly into the English language. In some cases, spelling has changed slightly, but many words retain the same spelling in both languages (allowing for differences in pronunciation, of course).

Some of the most familiar words are listed on the next page. You can use this page to make a transparency or photocopies if you like. You may prefer to put the words on the board or have older students write them as you read the list aloud.

Students can be encouraged to get more information about these words, using a large (Collegiate) dictionary that gives word sources. They will find that the original meanings of some of these words differ from the meanings they have in English today.

Many French words were adopted following the Norman Conquest in 1066 when Duke William of Normandy led his forces to victory over the English and became King William I. During his reign, only the French language was spoken at the English court, while Latin was used for official documents. The English people continued to speak their native language, but more and more French words crept in during the period of French domination. Students will find that some of the original French words in this earlier period had slightly different spellings and meanings compared to their English counterparts.

In English there are several names of things which begin with the word *French*. For example: French toast, French cuff, French pastry, and French bread. Students can be challenged to make a list of such words and expressions, with their definitions, and discuss why such titles are distinctly French.



### **French Words Used in English**

Here are some words that originated in French and have been taken into the English language. Some of these words are spelled the same in both languages. When the original French word is spelled differently, it is given in parentheses.

amateur	government ( <i>gouvernement</i> )
avenue	honor ( <i>honneur</i> )
boulevard	judge ( <i>juge</i> )
buffet	menu
bureau	number ( <i>nombre</i> )
catalog ( <i>catalogue</i> )	reason ( <i>raison</i> )
chapter ( <i>chapitre</i> )	salad ( <i>salade</i> )
chef	table
cousin	tennis
difficult ( <i>difficile</i> )	village



An Activity is provided at the end of the unit for additional practice with the words on this list.

## Reading and Analyzing

Many well-known fairy tales, especially those with romantic themes, were collected and published in their French versions by the seventeenth-century French writer Charles Perrault. Stories such as Snow White, Cinderella, and Sleeping Beauty are filled with magic and always have happy endings. Children should be encouraged to read these and others in the collection and discuss them and analyze their content.

What are the usual themes? They include a vulnerable young person; evil people who want to harm her (or him); a daring rescue by a loving person, often a prince; and an ending in which the good characters marry and live happily ever after.

Beauty is important in these stories. Is goodness also important?

What is the ultimate theme? Love triumphs over all; goodness is rewarded; kindness always helps; evil is punished—or is it something else?

Bruno Bettelheim speaks of fairy tales as expressing the deepest feelings, longings, fears, hopes, and truths of life. What is expressed in each of these that students can identify with?



## Writing

Students can use the following suggestion for writing activities, or they can think of some of their own.

### Fairy Tales

As a way to follow up the reading and discussion of these fairy tales, students can be encouraged to write their own sequels called *Twenty Years Later*. For example, what happens to Cinderella and the Handsome Prince after they have been married for twenty years? Do they have children? Has Cinderella put on weight? Is Prince Charming going bald? Do they ever long for the good old days of the glass slipper?

This could also be done with Sleeping Beauty. Is she longing for the long sleep she once had, now that she stays awake at night worrying about her son or daughter coming home late?

### Fables

Fables, too, have been rewritten by the French, especially by the seventeenth-century poet Jean La Fontaine. His version is often the best known. After reading a few such as *The Ant and the Grasshopper* or *The Fox and the Crow*, children can be encouraged to analyze the form of a fable:

- ◆ short;
- ◆ usually about animals;
- ◆ problem presented at the beginning;
- ◆ quick action that resolves the problem;
- ◆ conclusion in the form of a moral.

Then students will be ready to write their own. Topics fables for today might be:

- ◆ the dog who is tired of fetching the newspaper for his master
- ◆ the dog who wants more attention from his master;
- ◆ the cat who likes only certain kinds of food;
- ◆ the dog who is jealous of the attention the cat gets;
- ◆ the parrot who wants to learn some new words;
- ◆ the canary who is lonely all day in a big empty house.

In each case the problem is presented and the animal must solve it through cleverness, trickery, flattery of others, or goodness. What can be done?

## Oral Skills

Students can prepare and present a dialogue between people living in castles (as in fairy tales) and those outside the castles. Here is an example:

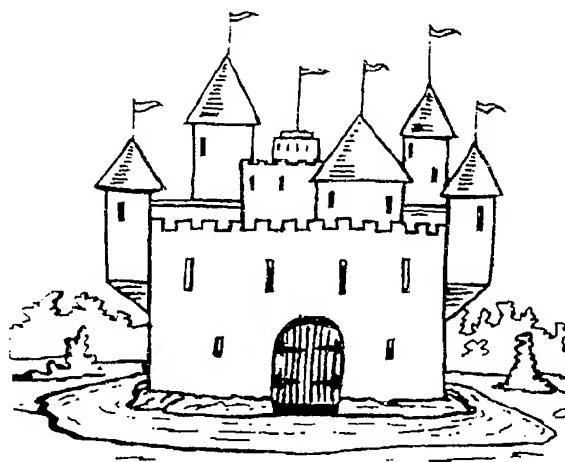
*Lady in the Castle:* I'm so busy! This morning I had to give directions to all the maids and servants for the dinner to be held tonight. This afternoon I have to make sure the flowers and food are ready. Then I have to spend time with my maid deciding on my dress, jewels, and makeup.

*Lady in the Small House:* You think you're busy! I have to take care of my children, do all the cooking, cleaning, and washing, and take care of the garden. I don't have any servants to help me!

*Lady in the Castle:* Ah, but you have more freedom than I do.

*Lady in the Small House:* How is that?

The discussion then goes on to explain the life of the peasant woman as well as what is known as *noblesse oblige*. Have students look up this term and find out more about it.



# ACTIVITY

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Here are words that originated in French and have been taken into English over the centuries.

amateur	honor
buffet	reason
chapter	table
difficult	tennis
government	village

1. Write the word that fits in each sentence.

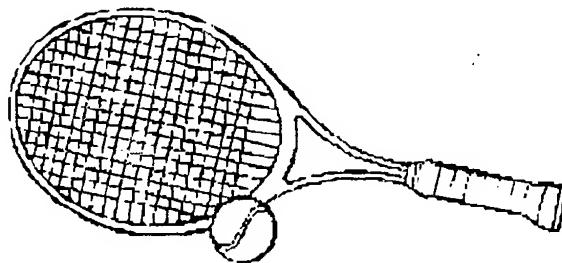
- a. Many foods were served on the \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. She plays very well even though she is an \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. My \_\_\_\_\_ racket is broken.
- d. They live in a small \_\_\_\_\_ in the valley.
- e. The \_\_\_\_\_ is piled high with books.

2. Some of the original French words on this list are not spelled exactly like their English versions. Here are the French spellings for some of these words:

chapitre raison honneur difficile gouvernement

Write the original French spelling beside each word given below.

- a. honor \_\_\_\_\_
- b. government \_\_\_\_\_
- c. chapter \_\_\_\_\_
- d. difficult \_\_\_\_\_
- e. reason \_\_\_\_\_



## Folktales from France

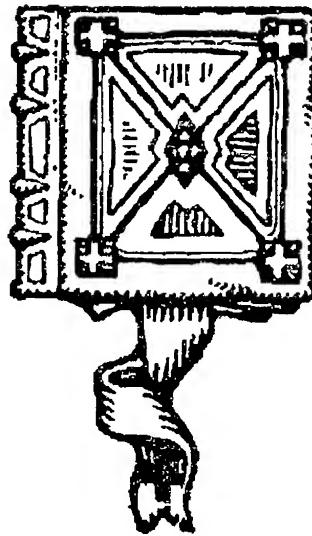
*Favorite Fairy Tales Told in France* by Virginia Haviland  
(Beech Tree Books/William Morrow)

*French Legends, Tales and Fairy Stories* by Barbara L. Picard (Oxford University Press)

*Magical Tales from Many Lands* retold by Margaret Mayo contains the story entitled "Three Golden Apples" (Dutton)

*Thirty-Three Multicultural Tales to Tell* by Pleasant DeSpain contains the story "Little Jack & Lazy John" (August House)

The folktales told by Charles Perrault and the fables of Jean La Fontaine are also appropriate for this unit and are available in various editions.



## Web Sites

### French Bookmarks

<http://forlang.utoledo.edu/BOOKMARK/BookmarkFRN.html>

### Cultural Explorer

[http://ottawa.ambafrance.org/index\\_eng.html](http://ottawa.ambafrance.org/index_eng.html)

Le Francophile - National bilingual magazine of French culture features quality articles in English and French and cultural events in the U.S. and France.

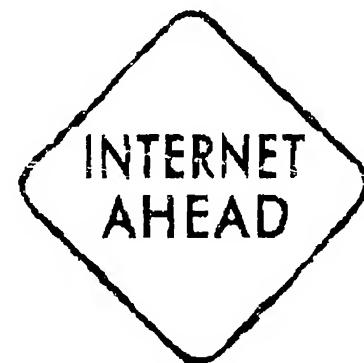
<http://www.lefrancophile.com/>

### Focus on French

<http://focusmm.com.au/%7Efocust/france/franamn.htm>

### French Contacts

<http://www.francecontacts.com/theindex.htm>



# SPAIN



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## SPAIN

Spain, once a great empire with colonies in the New World, is an enormously interesting and vital country. Spain is the only European country once ruled by the Moors of northern Africa, who made many positive contributions while they held power. Spain, notable for its long history and its strong personalities, is a rugged yet beautiful land, with harsh winters in the North and a gentle, moderate climate in the South.

As students learn about Spain, they can look at various regions and important cities, each with its highly distinctive characteristics. They can consider different periods in history and different principalities. They will learn about Old and New Castile, the Basque Country, Aragon, Catalonia, Andalusia, and all the other provinces. They will view:

- ◆ Madrid, the capital city and hub of the nation;
- ◆ Salamanca, heart of the intellectual life and universities of Spain;
- ◆ Toledo, a living outdoor museum of Spanish history;
- ◆ Avila, the walled city, retaining much of its medieval past;
- ◆ Granada, with the fascinating Moorish palace called the Alhambra;
- ◆ Barcelona, with its fierce defense of its own heritage and its own Catalonian language; and
- ◆ Sevilla, center of Spain's colonial heritage.

With these viewpoints, Spain will offer an ever-changing kaleidoscope of color, of life, of historical and present aspects, easily incorporated into language arts.



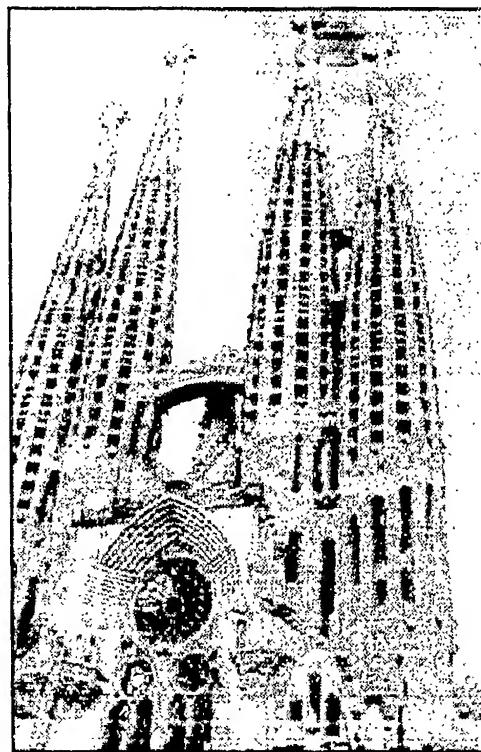
## Language and Word Skills

Many Spanish words have entered the English language, often with some changes in pronunciation. A number of Spanish words have kept the same spelling in English, but others have changed.

On the next page, you will find a list of familiar words that originated in Spanish, followed by their original spellings when they differ from English. Use this page to make a transparency or photocopies if you like. You might prefer to read the English words for students to write themselves; the original Spanish words can be put on the board.

Students may wish to look up some of these words and see which are native to Spain and which have come from one of the Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America, especially Mexico. They may also be interested in knowing that the Spanish language in Spain is spoken differently from that of Latin America. For example, one prominent difference is the sound for the letter *c* in *gracias*, which is spoken with the /s/ sound in Central and South America, but is pronounced as *grathias* in Spain.

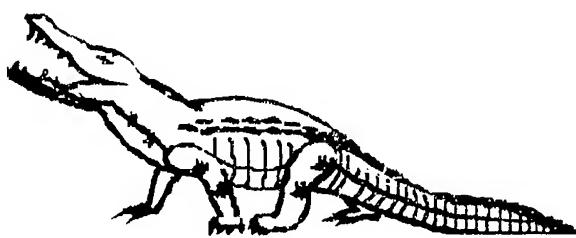
Another point of interest for students may be the fact that Spanish is one of easiest languages to pronounce because most words are clearly phonetic. When students know the sounds of the vowels and consonants in Spanish, they can pronounce any word.



## Spanish Words Used In English

Here are some words that have been taken into English from the Spanish language. Some of these words retained their original spelling when they entered English. When the original Spanish word is spelled differently from its English version, the Spanish spelling (and meaning) is given in the column on the right. Make sure you know the meaning of each word. Look up any words that are unfamiliar.

English	Spanish
cork	corcho
comrade	camarada
iguana	
alligator	el lagarto (the lizard)
armadillo	
mosquito	
banana	
cañó	carga (from cargar, to load)
parade	parada
guitar	guitarra
siesta	
cockroach	cucaracha
barracuda	
avocado	aguacate
barbecue	barbacoa (framework for supporting meat over a fire)
plaza	
patio	
pueblo	
breeze	brisa (northeast wind)



You may want to use the Activity at the end of this unit to practice working with some of these words.

# Writing

## Weather Rhymes

One song in the musical *My Fair Lady* says, "The rain in Spain stays mainly on the plain." In fact, it doesn't; the plain has little rain. But it is a starting point for writing rhymes about weather patterns in Spain. For example, summers are often unbearably hot, winters can be cold, snow is possible in April, and rain may come at any time.

### Weather in Spain

Summer in Spain is hot, so hot;  
Winter in Spain is not, is not.  
It may snow in April or May,  
Or it may rain all day, all day.  
The Basque country is green and cool  
But in Sevilla, just stay in the pool.

Students may make up one-line rhymes to fit any part of the country. For example:

*The heat of Cordoba is not so sweet.*  
*The mountains have snow; not the place to go.*

## Essays

For many years Spain had an enviable record of religious tolerance as the Moors and Christians managed to live together peacefully. Students can write essays on religious tolerance and on living with people who are different from one another. What are the advantages? What are the problems?

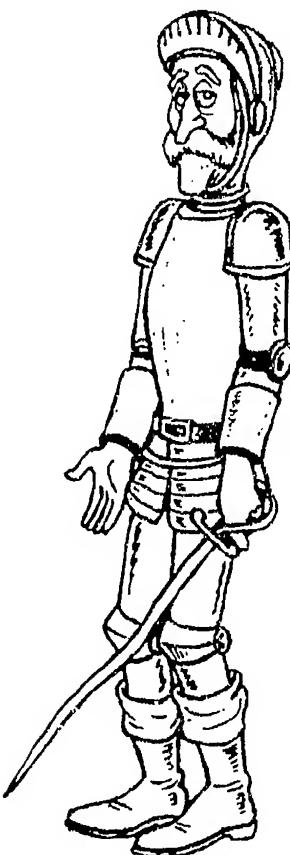
Students can also research situations in which differences have been a problem. Find out how they were overcome or how they persist.

## Novels

One of the greatest novels of all time is *Don Quixote*, written in the early 17th century by Miguel de Cervantes. It is often considered the first truly modern novel. Students can learn about how it is written and see that it is episodic in form. It is also satiric, although not biting; humorous, yet serious in places.

Students who are not ready for the novel can be encouraged to watch the play or movie, *Man of La Mancha*. Then they can write their own novel. Since an episodic novel lends itself to having different people write different parts, students could be assigned various chapters, alone or in groups, once an overall view has been decided upon by the students.

It would be interesting to take a character from Spanish history and develop a story. An example would be an adventurer who wants to go the New World with Cortez or one of the other conquistadores.



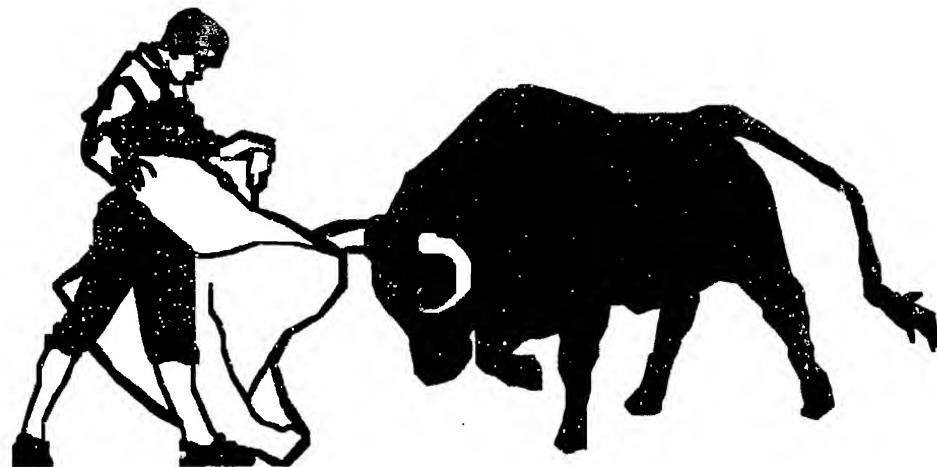
## Oral Skills

Bullfights are part of the heritage of Spain, but they are surrounded by much controversy. Is bullfighting a sport? Should it be banned?

Animal lovers often consider this a brutal, cruel sport in which an animal is tormented and killed. Those who defend bullfighting say that it is not really so much a sport as a drama; the outcome is known. As for killing the bull, anyone who eats beef should remember that beef comes from animals that have been killed. This could make for a spirited debate on the part of individuals and teams. Skills to be worked on include careful research of points of argument, as well as presentation in which facts, not emotional appeals, are used to support the argument.

Another topic for debate would be similar to one that was carried on in Spain for a few hundred years, related to how the Indians in the New World were treated. Some thought that, since the lands were conquered by Spain, everyone living there became a subject to Spain and Spaniards had the right to take their gold, require them to work, or even force them into slavery. Others believed that the Indians had a right to their own lives and could become a part of the Spanish empire only if they chose to do so.

It would also be interesting for students to discuss exactly how the world would be today if the Spanish had gone to the New World only to trade, to learn, and to be friends rather than to conquer the native people and try to eliminate all signs of their culture.



## ACTIVITY

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Here are some words that have been taken into English from Spanish. Look up any words that you don't know.

cork	siesta
comrade	plaza
alligator	patio
mosquito	breeze
parade	barbecue

1. Write the word that fits in each sentence.

- a. It's good to take a \_\_\_\_\_ each afternoon.
- b. Townspeople meet each other in the \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. A big \_\_\_\_\_ keeps buzzing around my head.
- d. Many bands and floats were in the \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. Let's sit on the \_\_\_\_\_ and cool off.

2. Some of the original Spanish words on this list are not spelled exactly like their English versions. Here are the Spanish spellings of these words:

brisa corcho el lagarto barbacoa camarada

Write the original Spanish spelling beside each word given below.

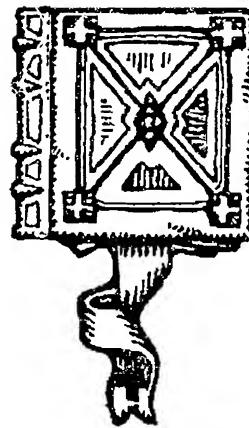
- a. alligator \_\_\_\_\_
- b. breeze \_\_\_\_\_
- c. comrade \_\_\_\_\_
- d. cork \_\_\_\_\_
- e. barbecue \_\_\_\_\_

## Folktales from Spain

*Classic Folktales from Around the World* contains four tales from Spain. (Leopard/Random House)

*Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Spain*, retold by Virginia Haviland (Beech Tree Books/William Morrow & Co.)

*A World of Fairy Tales* by Andrew Lang contains two Spanish stories, "The Princess Bella-Flor" and "The Knights of the Fish" (Dial Books)



## Web Sites

Woodberry Forest School Spanish Links

<http://www.gemlink.com/wfsww/fac/huber/spanish1.htm>

Spanish Geography

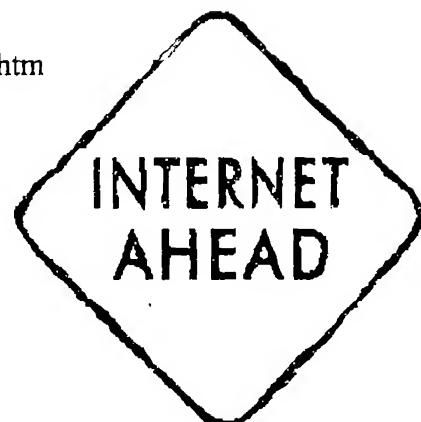
<http://www.DocuWeb.ca/SiSpain/english/geopop.html>

Focus on Spain

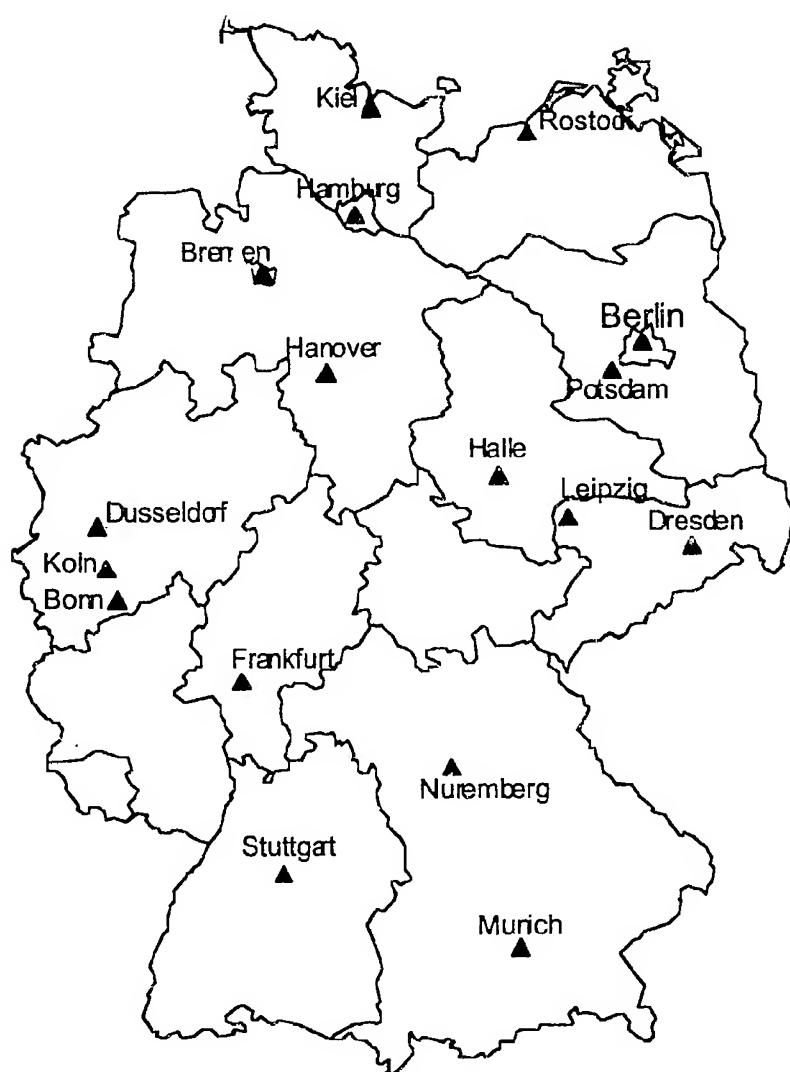
[http://focusmm.com.au/%7Efocusspain/sp\\_anamn.htm](http://focusmm.com.au/%7Efocusspain/sp_anamn.htm)

City Net - Spain

<http://www.city.net/countries/spain/>



# GERMANY



## GERMANY

Many Americans feel at home in Germany, a country of castles, palaces, formal gardens and dark forests. Germany, land of efficiency and serious education, is also the no-nonsense land that has also produced some of the world's greatest fantasies. Germany, destroyed in the past by great wars, is now united and struggling to cope with modern problems.

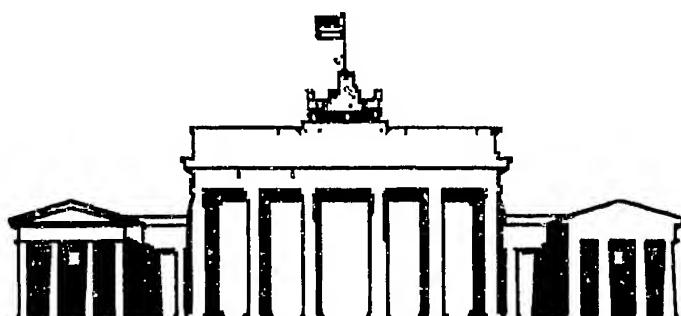
Germany has developed industry and business, but has not lost its agriculture nor its countryside. It is the country that has learned how to rise from ashes, to rebuild itself, and to present a compassionate face to the rest of the world.

Students can learn about the origins and history of the major cities in Germany:

- ◆ Berlin, the thirteenth-century city that is now the largest in Germany, once divided by a wall between east and west, now the capital of a unified country;
- ◆ Hamburg, the largest port and the second largest city in Germany, founded in the ninth century by the French king Charlemagne;
- ◆ Leipzig, an important industrial and cultural center, site of a university founded almost 600 years ago;
- ◆ Munich, third largest city in Germany, founded in the thirteenth century and capital of the southern province of Bavaria;
- ◆ Dresden, dating back to the thirteenth century, almost totally destroyed in World War II and completely rebuilt since 1945.

Many Americans have ambiguous feelings about Germany. A large number of Americans—perhaps twenty percent—have roots in Germany, but America has fought Germany in two major wars. Then, after the last war, we helped to rebuild Germany. Today at times we are sometimes in conflict, fighting a kind of industrial war with Germany.

Even so, there is much about Germany that we love and use in our daily lives, from music to Christmas trees to food. What would our lives be like without such things? They can all be used to develop language arts skills.



## Language and Word Skills

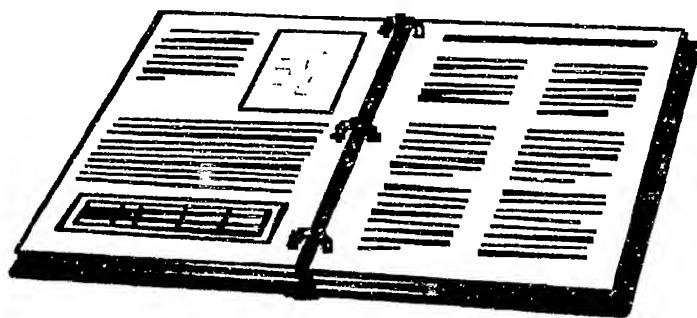
As we said in the unit on Great Britain, the English language began when people from northern Germany began to settle in the British Isles in the fifth century. This means that Old English originated in an early form of the German language. However, the English we speak today has changed enormously over the centuries under the influence of Latin, Greek, French, and other languages. Today's German, on the other hand, has developed independently from the earlier forms of the language and has not been greatly affected by other languages. Today, German and English seem to have almost nothing in common except for a few words such as *Haus* (house), *Feld* (field), *See* (sea), and *Boot* (boat).

One thing that German and English do share is the formation of compound words made up of other words that describe what something *is* or what it *does*. Such words are very common in German, and many of them are very long because they join three or four words instead of only two, as in most English compounds.

A few examples of these German compounds are given on the next page. You can show students the individual words from which these compounds are formed, and they can see how the compound does in fact tell what the object is or does. You can use this page to make a transparency or photocopies or you may prefer to write the words on the board and discuss them.

In English we have many compound words that describe what a certain thing *is* or *does*. For example, a *raincoat* is a coat that keeps out the rain, and a *notebook* is a book in which we keep notes. Students might like to make up some "new" English words of their own following this pattern. These can be fanciful words that tell what a certain thing *is*.

For example, instead of using the word *garage*, we could make up the word *carhouse* to describe exactly what a garage is used for. We could also make up the word *bookplace* to describe what a library is. Have students think of other compounds of this type. This idea is pursued in the activity at the end of this unit.



### German Compound Words

Many German words are formed by joining two or more individual words to form compound words. The new compound word often describes what something *is* or tells what it *does*. Look at the two or three individual words that go into the compound form in the following examples. (The compounds are all nouns, and German nouns are always capitalized.)

*Regenschirm* (umbrella) from *Regen* (rain) and *Schirm* (screen).

*Weihnachtsmann* (Santa Claus) from *Weihnachten* (Christmas) and *Mann* (man).

*Schlittschuh* (skate) from *Schlitten* (sled) and *Schuh* (shoe).

*Kindergarten* from *Kinder* (children) and *Garten* (garden).

*Schlafzimmer* (bedroom) from *Schlaf* (sleep) and *Zimmer* (room).

*Unterseeboot* (submarine) from *unter* (under), *See* (sea), and *Boot* (boat). A submarine is in fact an “under-sea boat.”

*Bahnhof* (railway station) from *Bahn* (railway) and *Hof* (yard).



You can use the Activity at the end of this unit for additional work on German words.

## Writing

Several kinds of activities can be used to help students learn about Germany.

### Essays

The following might be interesting topics for older students to write about:

Why is that Germany has produced a large number of scientists as well as musicians? Compare Italy, for example, which has produced musicians, but not many scientists; or France, which has produced great painters, or England, which has produced some of the best literature of the world. What does this reflect about the characteristics of a country?

Is it right to blame today's Germans for the atrocities of the Second World War? How might Germans today view the horrors of the war and its results?

### Poetry

The Berlin Wall was the source of both shame and terror for a long time until its destruction. Even so, it was important both historically and symbolically. Students could make a wall of stone and put words or phrases on them relating to the issue of a divided country. Put together, these graffiti make a kind of very modern poetry. (Ask students to look up the word *graffiti* in the dictionary. There they will see that *graffiti* is the plural form. What language does it come from, and what does it mean?) Here is an example:

#### The Graffiti Wall

Separation; partially apart; physically apart, but spiritually?  
Who built this wall? I did not build this wall.  
Walls are meant to be climbed over.  
Something in us does not love a wall.  
Walls cannot keep us apart.

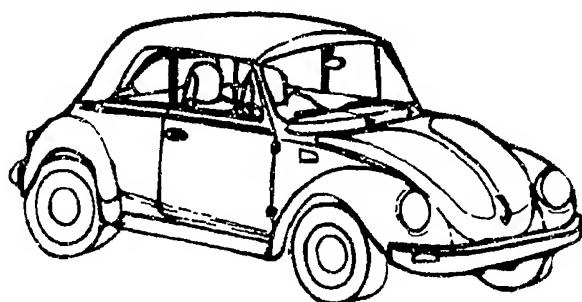
## Oral Skills

Many students know the little rhyme: "When two vowels go walking, the first does the talking." This is useful with many English words such as *road* and *mean* and *rain*, but it doesn't apply in German. For example, when an *e* and an *i* are together in a German word, it is the second vowel that is pronounced. Examples are *Einstein* (the letters *ei* spell the "long *i*" sound) and *wiener* (the letters *ie* spell the "long *e*" sound in the first syllable). Also, the name of the river Main looks like it would rhyme with English rain, but it is actually pronounced mine. Have students see if they can find names or words that illustrate this rule (*Die Meistersinger*, for example).

Also point out that certain letters in German don't sound the same as they do in English. In German (as well as a number of other European languages) the vowel sounds are these:

a	—	ah
e	—	ay
i	—	ee
o	—	oh
u	—	oo

The German letter *v* is pronounced like the English *f*, and the German *w* is pronounced like the English *v*. The car called the Volkswagen is pronounced "FolksVagen" in German, and this describes what it is: a car (*Wagen*) that affordable for average people (*Volk*).



### Storytelling

Many of our best-loved folk and fairy tales were written down by people from Germany. The most famous collection was published by the brothers Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm in the 19th century. The German versions of tales such as *Rumpelstiltskin*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Rapunzel*, *Cinderella*, and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* are all well-known.

Students will enjoy the story of Rumpelstiltskin because it involves a wicked, weird magician with a long and unusual name. In fact, the German word *Rumpel* means "junk, rubbish," and the original German word *Rumpelstilzchen* means "hobgoblin." While telling this story, students can emphasize some of the qualities common to folktales: the use of threes (three gifts to Rumpelstiltskin, three days to learn his name, three guesses each day); truly evil people who get their just deserts; people who have trouble simply because they are simpleminded.

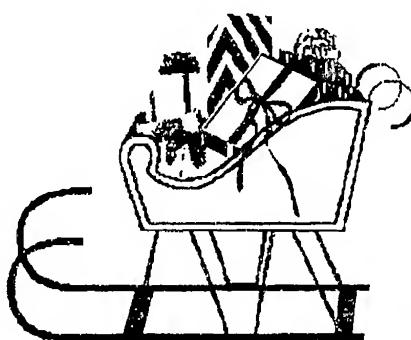
Students can tell such stories and then comment on them. They can also make variations of them, using the same devices. Especially enjoyable for children would be the making up of other names for Rumpelstiltskin. (In fact, in some versions of this story, he does have a different name).

Students will also learn that characters in fairy tales rarely have real names. A young man will be identified as "the foolish son" or "the third son," and the handsome prince may be called Prince Charming, not Fred or Waldo. A young woman is "the lazy daughter" or "the beautiful princess who couldn't laugh," and names such as Cinderella or Snow White simply suggest how these women look or what they do. As they make up and tell their stories, students may do the same thing: Give names that are not the usual types (John, Mary) but instead identify characteristics of the people (The Evil Troll, The Wise King, etc.).

### Reports: Christmas Customs

Many of our most popular Christmas customs originated in Germany and reflect the fact that Christmas there is celebrated in a very cold part of the year, in a cold part of the world, and in a country with forests. Examples include the Christmas tree, Christmas carols (such as *Silent Night* and *Away in the Manger*), snow and icicles as decorations, and the image of Santa Claus dressed in fur and riding on a sleigh.

Students could make a list of Christmas customs and find out where they came from. Where did poinsettias come from? Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer? Various other Christmas songs? (These didn't all originate in Germany, but they could be looked into on their own.) These would be useful for oral reports, especially if they are accompanied by pictures or taped music.



# ACTIVITY

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Here are some German words. Each one is followed by its literal meaning in English.

Regen (rain)	Flug (flight)	Zimmer (room)
Werk (works)	Haus (house)	Schuh (shoe)
Schlaf (sleep)	Hafen (port)	Schirm (screen)
Wasser (water)	Schlitten (sled)	krank (sick)

1. Now look at these German compound words made up of the individual words given above. After each compound, write its literal meaning. Then give the more familiar English word we use today to name the same thing.

Regenschirm \_\_\_\_\_  
Wasserwerk \_\_\_\_\_  
Schlittschuh \_\_\_\_\_  
Flughafen \_\_\_\_\_  
Krankenhaus \_\_\_\_\_  
Schlafzimmer \_\_\_\_\_

If you need some help, consider where these English words might fit:

hospital    fountain    bedroom    airport    sled    umbrella

2. Invent some new compound words similar to the German ones given above. For example, we could make up the compound term “book place” to describe what a *library* is. The list below gives some familiar English words. Think of your own compound term that describes what the item is.

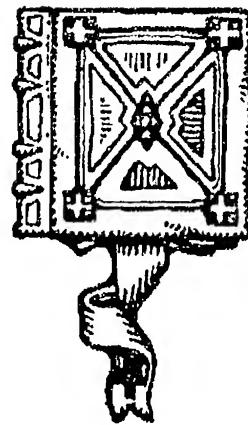
a. school \_\_\_\_\_  
b. gym \_\_\_\_\_  
c. shovel \_\_\_\_\_  
d. harbor \_\_\_\_\_  
e. restaurant \_\_\_\_\_

## Folktales from Germany

*Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Germany* by Virginia Haviland  
(Beech Tree Books/William Morrow)

*German Hero-sagas and Folk-tales* by Barbara L. Picard (Oxford University Press)

*Thirty-Three Multicultural Tales to Tell* by Pleasant DeSpain  
contains the German story entitled "Clever Gretel"  
(August House)



## Web Sites

### German Bookmarks

<http://www.forlang.utoledo.edu/BOOKMARK/BookmarkGER.html>

### Web Sites on Germany

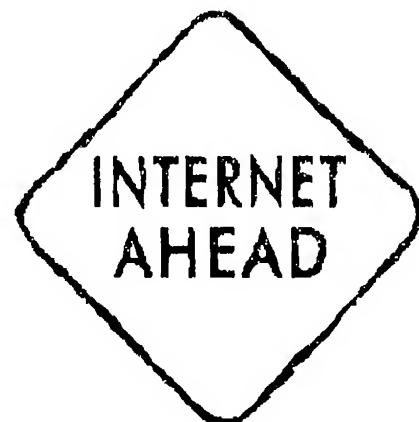
<http://www.chemie.fu-berlin.de/adressen/brd.html>

### City Net - Germany

<http://www.city.net/countries/germany/>

### WWW German Resources

<http://www.lib.cbs.dk/country/germany.html>



# **ITALY**



## ITALY

Sunny Italy, the boot-shaped appendage to Europe, is European in its connections but can never resist its attraction to the Mediterranean Sea.

Italy was not a unified country until about a century ago, but Rome, its eternal city, ruled an enormous empire 2000 years ago. The Italian influence has been widespread, not only during the Roman Empire but also during the Renaissance of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The major cities of Italy have played important roles:

- ◆ Rome, the ancient city dating back to the eighth century B.C., is the capital that has given us many of our ideas on law and government
- ◆ Venice, with its countless canals and lagoons, is an important port on the Adriatic Sea that has influenced our ideas of commerce
- ◆ Florence, in north-central Italy, has been an important center of trade and culture from the thirteenth century and has influenced our concepts of art and architecture
- ◆ Milan, in northern Italy near the Alps, is noted for the La Scala opera house, cathedrals featuring the work of Leonardo da Vinci, and businesses devoted to the latest in electronic and computer technology

It would be hard to overestimate the power of Italy in our lives, and yet there is even more to consider. We must think also of the fertile fields of grain, of the fruits that seem to taste better there than in any other place, of the richness of the ocean shores for seafood. No wonder that so many of our favorite foods come from Italy.

Above all, we cannot forget the joy and passion with which the Italians seem to embrace life. Their lives have not always been easy and their days as rulers of empire have been matched by other days of defeat and domination, but few people of the world seem to love living as they do. This is shown in their love of language and talking, of opera and singing, in drama and celebrations of every kind. All of these can be worthwhile topics for the study of language arts in the cultural life of Italy.

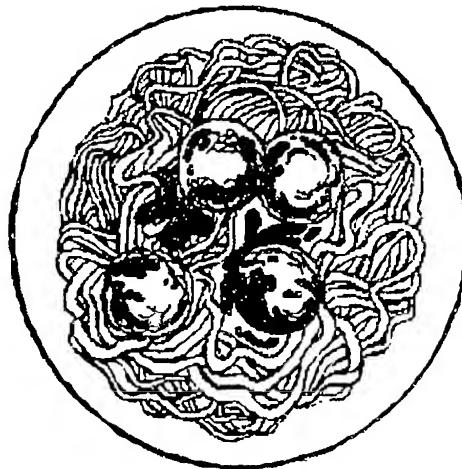


## Language and Word Skills

Many Italian words are used in English. Among of the most familiar are the names of some of our favorite foods. Students might enjoy making a list of Italian words that relate to food.

A few suggestions are given in the list below. Use this list to make a transparency or photocopies if you like. You may also put the words on the board if you prefer. Make sure that students look up any words whose meanings they don't already know.

antipasto	piccante
cacciatora	prosciutto
cannelloni	ricotta
lasagna	risotti
manicotti	scaloppine
minestrone	spaghetti
parmigiana	vermicelli
pasta	zucchini



You can use the Activity at the end of this unit for additional work on Italian words.

# Reading and Writing

Several activities can be used for the study of language in the culture of Italy.

## Opera Librettos.

One art form for which Italy is very famous is opera. Many operas have complex or outlandish stories featuring dramatic episodes such as sleepwalking scenes, murder attempts, or tragedies caused by mistaken identity. Such "melodramatic" scenes were designed to hold the interest of the audience in days before soap operas or "thrillers."

Younger students may enjoy reading paraphrased stories of some of the best-known operas such as Verdi's *Aida* or *Rigoletto* and Puccini's *La Boheme* or *Madama Butterfly*. Older students may want to read the complete librettos for these operas. *Libretto* is an Italian word meaning "little book." A libretto contains all the words sung by each character in an opera.

You may want to play recordings of some of the most popular arias from Italian operas and then encourage students to write their own musical stories. If they cannot compose their own melodies, they can adapt their words to well-known folk songs or popular songs. For example, younger children can take a story such as "The Three Little Pigs" and use songs to express what the characters want to say. Here are some suggestions:

### First Little Pig

(Sung to tune of "Here We Go Around the Mulberry Bush")

I build my house of straw, of straw,  
I build my house of straw, of straw,  
I build my house of straw, of straw,  
It is quick and easy.

### Second Little Pig

I build my house of sticks, of sticks,  
I build my house of sticks, of sticks,  
I build my house of sticks, of sticks,  
It will last much longer.

### Third Little Pig

I build my house of bricks, of bricks,  
I build my house of bricks, of bricks,  
I build my house of bricks, of bricks,  
It will last forever.

### Wolf

(Sung to the tune of "O Christmas Tree")

O little pigs, O little pigs,  
I'm very glad to see you.  
Please let me in, Please let me in,  
I want to come and visit.

Older children might take another story and use other songs that are currently popular.

For another activity, students can write stories of famous Italian people and put the stories to music. This will encourage students to get information about such people and then to find appropriate music. Here are some famous people to consider:

Julius Caesar  
Nero  
Any of the other Caesars  
Galileo  
The Medici family  
Mussolini  
Marconi

## Poetry

Many aspects of Italy lend themselves to poetry: the sun, the sea, mountains, fields, and orchards, for example. Students can write poems that show how these add to the zest of Italian life. Here is an example:

### The Sun

I am the sun,  
Warm and bright,  
I give the Italians  
Joy and hope and reason  
To flee the night.

## Recipes

Students can also give recipes for Italian dishes. At first they will simply give recipes that their mothers or others use; then they can write their own. This means that they must know the abbreviations for teaspoon, tablespoon, and other items commonly used in recipes.

Of course, this activity is not complete until students have the opportunity to prepare and eat at least one of their recipes.



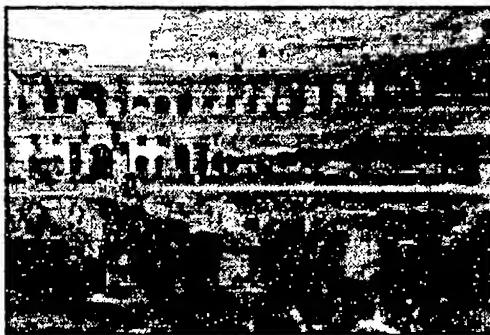
## Oral Skills

The study of Italy, with its long and varied history, presents a wealth of ideas for oral presentations that individual students can research and present. For example, students can give reports on individual city-states. What is important about Rome, Milan, Pisa, Naples, Turin, Florence, or Venice? Each report could respond to questions such as these:

1. What is the city most famous for?
2. When in history was it powerful?
3. How many people live there today?
4. How has it changed in recent years?



Michelangelo's David is one of the art treasures in Florence.

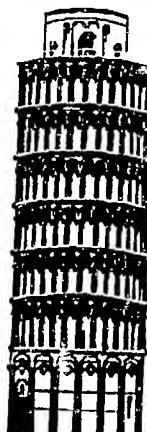


Ruins that are thousands of years old such as the Colosseum make the city of Rome a fascinating place to visit.



Venice, a city of canals, was once the center of European commerce.

Younger children can give reports on the various fruits and vegetables grown in Italy: grapes, pears, apples, oranges, tomatoes, olives, peppers, squash, etc. They could draw or cut out pictures and tell about each product.



# ACTIVITY

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

1. Here are some Italian words for foods. These were listed earlier in this unit. Beside each word, explain what it is. Look up any words you don't know already.

a. lasagna \_\_\_\_\_

b. minestrone \_\_\_\_\_

c. pasta \_\_\_\_\_

d. vermicelli \_\_\_\_\_

e. zucchini \_\_\_\_\_

2. Here are some other Italian words that are used in English. Write the meaning for each word if you know it, or look it up if necessary.

a. presto \_\_\_\_\_

b. fiasco \_\_\_\_\_

c. inferno \_\_\_\_\_

d. balcony \_\_\_\_\_

e. carnival \_\_\_\_\_

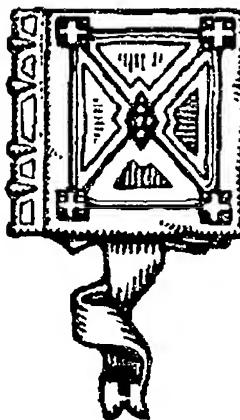


## Folktales from Italy

*Best-Loved Folktales of the World* by Joanna Cole contains four Italian stories.

*Favorite Fairy Tales Told in Italy* by Virginia Haviland (Beech Tree Books/William Morrow)

*Time for Old Magic* by May Hill Arbuthnot contains three Italian stories.



## Web Sites

Schools in Italy

<http://www.worldwide.edu/ci/italy/index.html>

Dante.Net general information on Italy

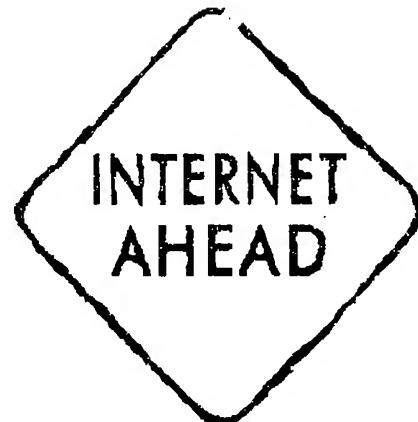
<http://www.dante.net:8888/c%3dIT>

Homepage of the U.S. Mission to Italy

<http://www.usis.it/>

FolkArt and Craft Exchange Worldwide

<http://www.folkart.com>



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The books and other sources listed below can be used to supplement the material you find in encyclopedias.

## *Fairytales and Legends*

Each of the following collections contains stories from several countries and cultures.

***Best-Loved Fairytales of the World***, selected and with an introduction by Joanna Cole.

NY: Anchor/Doubleday, 792 pages, 1982.

This large collection begins with more than 100 tales from Western Europe, the British Isles, Scandinavia and Northern Europe, and Eastern Europe. Next come stories from areas not always well represented in folktale collections: the Middle East, Asia (including Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, and India as well as Japan, China, and Korea), and the Pacific (Hawaii, Indonesia, Australia). The remaining stories are from Africa, North America, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

***Classic Fairy Tales to Read Aloud***, selected by Naomi Lewis. NY: Kingfisher, 1996.

This book contains stories as told by the Brothers Grimm, Perrault, and Andersen, along with tales from England, Russia, and other countries.

***Classic Fairytales from Around the World***; Introduction by Robert Nye. London:

Leopard/Random House, 1996.

This collection contains stories from countries not usually represented in other anthologies: Australia, Fiji, Madagascar, Papua, Tibet, and various regions in Africa, for example.

***Fairytales Told around the World*** by Richard M. Dorson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

Here you will also find stories from countries not often included in other anthologies: the Caribbean Islands, Pacific Islands, and several African countries, for instance.

***Goddesses, Heroes, and Shamans: The Young People's Guide to World Mythology***.

NY: Kingfisher, 1997.

This is a collection of myths from Northern Lands (Scandinavia), Africa, Mediterranean Lands, Eastern Asia, Central and South America, and the South Pacific.

***The Illustrated Book of Myths*** retold by Neil Philip. NY: Dorling Kindersley, 1995.

In this collection you will find Creation Myths; Stories of the Beginning of Life; Fertility and Cultivation; Gods and People; Gods and Animals; and Visions of the End.

***Magical Tales from Many Lands*** retold by Margaret Mayo; illustrated by Jane Ray. NY: Dutton Children's Books, 1993. This collection contains stories from Turkey, Japan, Scotland, the Caribbean, France, Peru, India, Australia, Russia, and China as well as traditional North American Indian, Zulu, Jewish, and African-American tales.

***Thirty-Three Multicultural Tales to Tell*** by Pleasant DeSpain. Little Rock: August House, 1994, paperback.

Individual stories from this collection are listed on the following pages at the end of the units to which they apply.

***A Treasury of Stories from Around the World*** chosen by Linda Jennings. NY: Kingfisher.

The seventeen stories in this book come from major countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa as well as from more unusual sources such as Iraq, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia. Aztec and Maori stories are also included.

***Trickster Tales: Forty Folk Stories from Around the World*** retold by Josephine Sherman. Little Rock, Arkansas: August House, 1996.

This collection includes tales from Africa, Europe, the Near East, Asia and Polynesia, Central and South America, and North America.

***A World of Fairy Tales*** by Andrew Lang. NY: Dial Books, 1994. The twenty-four stories in this book include tales from Spain, India, Scotland, Japan, Ancient Egypt, and North America.

## Information about Other Cultures

The following books are written for children and contain helpful information about a number of different countries.

***Children Just Like Me*** by Barnabas and Anabel Kindersley. NY: Dorling Kindersley, 1995.

Thirty foreign countries and five regions of the U.S. are represented in this book. Each country or region is discussed in a one- or two-page spread featuring photographs of children from the country itself. Written information is supplemented by smaller illustrations and photographs showing things that relate to daily life, including the kind of school work each child does.

***Circling the Globe: A Young People's Guide to Countries and Cultures of the World***. NY: Kingfisher, 1995.

Information on more than 180 countries is contained in this book, with photographs and illustrations on every page. Some smaller countries are covered in two-page spreads that provide basic information and illustrations. Larger countries are treated more extensively, with pages devoted to Geography, Economy, People, and History. In a few cases, some words from the language of the country are included as well.

***My Pen Pal Scrapbook: An Educational Journey Through World Cultures*** written and illustrated by Shelley Aliotti. Tiburon, CA: World View Publishers, 1995. This book features letters composed by the author as though they were written by children to other children in various countries. Each letter gives much information about the things children do in their daily lives in each country. In addition to the opening letter from America, the countries represented are Japan, Australia, Italy, Israel, Mexico, Scotland, France, Peru, Nigeria, Russia, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Germany, India, and China.

***Tintin's Travel Diaries***. NY: Barron's.

This is a series of books featuring a cartoon character named Tintin who acts as a reporter visiting a number of countries. Each book is built around a series of thirty questions about a particular country and its people ("What is . . . ?" "How do . . . ?" and so on.) Each question is answered in a two-page spread including text and illustrations. Books about the following countries or regions are included in the series: Africa, The Amazon, China, Egypt, India, Peru, Russia, Scotland, Tibet, and the United States.

## **Web Sites**

A number of Web Sites for individual countries are listed at the end of each unit. You can also find general information at the following sites.

Perry Caneñada Library Map Collection

[http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map\\_collection/Map\\_collection.html](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/Map_collection.html)

SitesALIVE!

<http://www.oceanchallenge.com/>

World Country Guide

<http://www.world-travel-net.co.uk/country/default.htm>

Tribes, Dolls, Faces and Places

<http://www.williamcoupon.com/photography.html>

Travel Tales Mainpage

<http://www.lpl/arizona.edu/~kimberly/medance/culture/travel.html>

Popular Attractions

<http://neworleansonline.com/tours2.htm>

FOCUS Multimedia: An online magazine on the culture, history, and tourism of Mediterranean countries

<http://www.focusmm.com.au/%7Efocus/welcome.htm#country>

City Net - Travel on the Internet

<http://www.city.net/>

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**Volume IV: Where and How People Live**

Where Is the Treasure Hidden? • Cities and Towns Around Us

The A-mazing First Americans • Awesome Aussies Down Under

**Volume V: Ecology and the Environment**

My Earthworm Pets • Inside Mother Earth • Runaway Land

Where Does the Rain Go? • Cleaning Our Waterways

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